our ugly symmetry (meant everything to me)
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Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. (TV), Marvel Cinematic Universe

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Skye | Daisy Johnson, Leo Fitz, the ever haunting specter of Grant Ward, mentions of others

Additional Tags:
Angst, lots of hurt not a lot of comfort, Unreliable Narrator, Implied/Referenced Child Abuse, Implied/Referenced Rape/Non-con, Ward is haunting the narrative like he's getting paid for it, this only goes from post s1 to post s4 I'm not touching their s5 dynamic with a ten foot pole, Leo Fitz Needs a Hug, Skye | Daisy Johnson Needs a Hug, good lord when the parallels between the characters hits, Romantic undertones but not enough to tag, just know that I imagined them kissing the entire time I was writing this, Fitz and Daisy referring to each other as "[their] Daisy/Fitz" :'), it's literally never mentioned but please know that Daisy is transmasc in this, Bittersweet Ending, Kind Of, Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder - PTSD, it's RAMPANT in these two good GOD, Mostly Dialogue, no beta we die like Fitz and Daisy's relationship in canon, unresolved issues tee hee, seriously nothing gets resolved in this. it's just 5600 words of them going through it, I cannot emphasize enough how unreliable these two are as narrators

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our ugly symmetry (meant everything to me)

by puppyboy_butch

Summary

"...I think he ruined me," Skye admits quietly. "I don't–"

Fitz tightens his shaky grip on her hand.

"I don't want to talk about it with the others," she continues. "I can't. They won't get it, I think. Not like– not like you. He ruined you too."

OR

A collection of in between moments exploring Fitz and Daisy's relationship.

Notes

I just know the em dash hates to see me coming 😈

They're like that one tumblr post that's like "characters who understand each other each other like no one else does and therefore hurt each other like no one else can" and I think they should kiss about it. Doomed toxic yaoi or whatever.

The timeline goes immediately post s1, very very end of s2 (post name change, pre the monolith eating Jemma), during s3 (right after Ward dies), very very end of s3 (post main plot, pre time skip), and immediately post s4 (but in an au wherein they don't get kidnapped to the future because I refuse to deal with that)

Title is from Lee (Columbine High Harmony) by Coma Cinema, which is sooo FitzDaisy to me.

Trigger warnings include:
-Discussions of past child abuse (Fitz's dad and Daisy's childhood) and sexual assault (Ward and briefly AIDA)
-Suicidal ideation and implied self harm/past suicide attempt
-One scene where a character throws up

-Fitz and Daisy both being convinced they're the worst people in the universe

See the end of the work for more notes

Skye startles awake with a gasp.

It takes her a second to remember where she is, that she's off the Bus.

(That she's safe, that her hands are free, that W– *he* isn't here.)

She lets out a shaky exhale when the semi-familiar sight of her new bunk finally registers. It's fine. Everything's fine.

Still, she can't stay in this room. Not with its silence and its stillness, not when she'd *just* finally gotten used to the mild turbulence and the ever present hum of the engines, the one that the others always insisted she shouldn't have been able to feel.

Skye throws the covers off her body and stands up, but pauses before she goes to leave. She could go out like this, in her tank top and boxers. There's barely any personnel besides her team, so the chances that anyone is awake to see her are slim. And even if someone were up, they wouldn't– wouldn't *do* anything.

But isn't that what she thought about–?

Better to be safe than sorry.

(Again.)

Skye pulls on a pair of pants and grabs a hoodie to throw over her tank top as she heads out her door.

She tries to keep her mind from wandering as she makes her way to the common room, but the hallways are only marginally better than her bunk in terms of silence, which isn't particularly conducive to her goal. At least the buzzing of the lights gives her something to focus on, keeping her from losing her mind.

She's been trying not to think about– what happened. What he did. It's hard, though, when there's a constant reminder right below her feet at all times, one who'll only talk to her.

He's right there. *He's right there!*

She shudders. Focus on the lights. Just focus on the lights.

She isn't sure what she'll do when she finally gets to the common room. May has some tea in the kitchen, she thinks. She'll probably just–

Skye stops in the doorway. Fitz is in one of the armchairs.

He woke up a couple of days ago, but he hasn't said anything yet. At all. Simmons said he'd be able to talk eventually, but Simmons isn't here anymore.

(Skye wonders when she'll stop learning what people's backs look like.)

She makes sure to step louder than she usually does as she walks past him into the kitchen. He's been spacey lately. Easily startled.

He doesn't even look up.

Skye watches him as she sets the water to boil. He's still, uncharacteristically so. She doesn't think she's ever seen him not *move* before, aside from when he was unconscious.

She gets out two mugs when the kettle whistles, then thinks better of it and swaps them out for travel mugs, the ones with the lids and straws. Fitz looks up at her sharply when she tries to hand one of them to him. He's only just now noticed her presence, it seems.

"Hot chocolate," she offers. "I was gonna make tea, but–" She kind of shakes it at him, prompting him to reach out and take it.

It immediately starts rattling with how hard his hands are trembling. Skye grimaces. She made the right call with the lids.

She sits in the armchair next to his and dangles her free arm over the side of it, a silent offering to hold his hand.

He takes it. Neither of them can tell whose hand is shaking more.

—

It happens again two nights later.

Skye jolts awake in the middle of the night, unable to shake the feeling of Wa– *his* hands on her body, his lips against hers.

The silence of the late– or is it early?– night is intercut with her gasping for air. Once again, it takes a minute for her surroundings to register in her mind. She lets out a frustrated huff when her brain finally catches up to the fact that she's safe.

(Or, as safe as she can be with him *right below her.*)

Of course it's not enough that he– did what he did. He has to ruin her *sleep* too.

She pulls on a flannel and heads out of her bunk. Focus on the lights. Focus on the lights.

Fitz is in the common room again. She was half hoping he would be.

He notices her right away this time, and– she thinks– tries to smile at her. It just comes across as a grimace. She sits in the same chair she did the other night. He offers her his hand. She takes it, tipping her head back so she can stare up at the ceiling.

They sit there, not talking. Him unable and her unwilling.

"...I think he ruined me," Skye eventually admits, quietly because she doesn't want *him* to hear. It's irrational, she knows, but he's ***right fucking below her.*** "I don't–"

Fitz tightens his shaky grip on her hand.

"I don't want to talk about it with the others," she continues. "I can't. They won't get it, I think. Not like– not like you. He ruined you too."

It's cruel. Needlessly so, and unfair to say when he can't even defend himself. But more than it's *true,* and she's tired of being a liar. And after what he did to her, she needs to cling to anyone or -thing she *can* to keep her head above water, even if it's cruel.

(*Especially,* maybe, especially if it's cruel. Maybe this is who she is now, who she's slowly becoming. Maybe he infected her with his cruelty and anger and *hate.* Maybe she's just like him.)

She should probably use a different analogy.

She sees Fitz curl up in his chair out of the corner of her eye. He's crying, she thinks. She can hear his breath hitching, see his shoulders shaking, feel his hand trembling in hers.

It's not until her vision starts to blur that she realizes that she's crying too.

"Do you ever–" Sk– *Daisy*– it's Daisy now– starts from her spot on his bed. "Do you ever miss your dad? Even though he hurt you?"

Fitz jolts. How does she–?

"I'm sorry," she immediately starts apologizing. "I'm– sorry. I know you don't like talking about him. I shouldn't have–"

"No," he rasps, then clears his throat. "You're fine. Just– how did you– how did you know? About him? I've never–"

He's never told anyone about his father, about what he did. Even Jemma knows nothing beyond the very surface level fact that Alistair Fitz was a cruel man.

"You never talk about him, even though you talk about your mom a lot," she starts. "And I–"

Skye stares up at him, her eyes far away and haunted and *familiar*.

"I know– what's it's like. To be afraid."

And oh. *Oh.*

Fitz swallows. "Do any of the others know?"

"I don't think so," Daisy replies. "I don't think they get it like I do."

His shoulders drop as he exhales in relief. He doesn't like people knowing. They always want to *talk* about it, always look at him differently when they find out. He doesn't want his team thinking of him like that, that scared little boy who just wanted his father to stop hurting him.

"So, do you? Miss him, I mean?" Daisy asks again, looking anywhere but at him.

"Yes," Fitz says. "I– yeah. He wasn't– he wasn't a good man. But he was still my da."

He looks down at his hands. They're shaking.

"I don't want to miss him," he whispers. "But I do."

He's never told anyone that before. Not Jemma, certainly not his ma. He's held onto it for almost a decade and a half now, just letting the *shame* of it all slowly eat him alive.

He barely has any good memories of the man, can count them on his hands and still have fingers left over. His childhood before his ma took him and ran was almost nothing but pain.

But Fitz never escaped him. Not really. He can still feel the debilitating fear coursing through his body. Still has that inescapable childish urge to make his father proud.

Maybe this time he'll be good enough. Maybe this time he won't hurt him. Maybe this time he'll be loved.

Maybe maybe maybe.

Looking over at his friend, his Daisy, with her constantly averted eyes and her always tense body and her still mostly unknown past, he thinks she gets it better than anyone else ever could. It's like looking into a fucked up mirror.

"*How?*" She questions. "How can you miss him? How can you– he *hurt* you. He was supposed to protect and he hurt you instead." She's getting worked up. Fitz has the feeling that this is not about him and his father. "It's fucked up to– to *miss* him. Right? It's– there has to be something *wrong* with you to *mi–*"

Daisy suddenly devolves into a coughing fit, the deep, wet sounding kind that always leaves you aching for ages after it's over. Her shoulders curl inward with the force of them.

It's a recent development, a direct consequence of what her mother did to her. Turns out getting the life force sucked out of you has side effects. Who would've thought?

The cough will go away, but the rest of it? The weakened immune system, the fatigue, the fingerprints carved into the sides of her face? Fitz was in the room when Jemma gave the prognosis. He knows that Daisy will likely have to be on medication for the rest of her life.

Fitz rubs her trembling back as it finally calms down. She curls up into a ball, pressing her forehead against the side of his thigh. Her breathing is still all wet and rattly. It's more than a little concerning.

"D'you need your inhaler?"

"*No.*" She shakes her head vehemently, then clutches at it with a muffled groan. The movement probably gave her a headache. That's been happening a lot lately. "M'fine."

She's not, and they both know it. But that's what the two of them do. Pretend. She pretends like her body isn't turning against her. He pretends like his hands aren't still shaking. They both pretend like they didn't die on the Bus.

He plays with her hair as she gathers her thoughts. It's getting long. She'll probably want to cut it soon.

"I miss–" Daisy cuts herself off, squeezes her eyes shut and curls into herself, presses her face into his leg. "I miss my *mom,*" she whimpers. "Even though she– did what she did. To *me.* I miss her."

The leg of Fitz's pants starts to grow damp with her tears.

"Why did she hurt me? Why do they *always* hurt me? I just– I just wanted my *mom.*"

Her voice cracks on the last word, making her actually sound her age for once. He remembers when they first met. Retroactively they all know she was very newly twenty, but none of them knew it at the time, and she's always seemed older than she is, more mature than she should have to be.

It's easy to forget, he thinks, how young she really is. At least until moments like this.

"My da would hit me," Fitz says. Daisy's breath hitches. "All the time. If I got a bad grade, if I embarrassed him, if I made him angry. He especially hated it when I cried, and I cried all the time around him. He'd scream until he was red in the face, would tell me I was nothing but a pathetic little fairy."

He can see Daisy watching him out of the corner of her eye. He takes a deep breath and keeps talking.

"My ma and I ran when I was eleven. Packed our things and left in the middle of the night. We stayed with her sister until we got our own place. That was fourteen years ago, and I still– I still get so *scared* sometimes."

Fitz tips his head back and tries to blink away the tears building in his eyes.

"I'll never forgive him, and I never want to see him again. But I think I'll always miss him, at least a little bit."

Daisy rolls over so she's facing away from him and curls up into the fetal position.

"I just want it to go away. I don't want to miss her," she says into her knees. "Why did she have to hurt me?"

Fitz lets his eyes fall shut.

"I don't know," he whispers. "I'm sorry."

"I wish he wasn't dead," Fitz says to Daisy as soon as her door opens. "I hate that he's dead."

He stares into her eyes (empty just like Fitz's, empty just like *his*) as she replies. "I wish he was still alive, so I could make him suffer."

His shoulders slump in something like relief. Over what, he's not sure. That she agrees? That he's not alone in this? That she's just as fucked up as he is?

(They're just like him.

They are both just. Like. ***Him.***)

Daisy pulls him into her room by his hand.

He's never actually been in here. They always hang out in his room, or the lab, or the common area. She doesn't like people in her room. Some instinct that carried over from her childhood, he's pretty sure.

He takes the chance to look around. It's empty, surprisingly so. The only personal effects– the only signs that someone lives here at *all,* actually– he can spot are her hula girl on her bedside table, an old, threadbare blanket that's way too small for her on her bed, and what he's pretty sure is a rosary hanging from the corner of her mirror. There's not any clothes on the floor. Even her bed is perfectly made.

"I didn't know you were religious."

Daisy frowns at him questioningly. "I'm not."

"Oh. But the–" Fitz points at the rosary. He can instantly tell he's

crossed a line by the way her face shutters closed. “Sorry.”

Daisy grabs the rosary off the mirror and throws it in one of the drawers of her dresser. “S’fine. Don't even know why I still have it,” she mutters, her voice flat.

She makes her way towards her bed and falls backwards onto it, grabbing the too small blanket and curling around it. He stands in the doorway, only walking over and joining her when she looks at him expectantly.

They lay there in silence, side by side on their backs.

Fitz counts the cracks in the ceiling, trying to think of something to say. What *do* you even say in this situation? What do you say to someone when your mutual abuser was just killed? Congratulations? I’m sorry?

Fitz really wishes he weren’t dead. He wishes he got a chance to rage at him properly, without his voice shaking. Where does he go from here? What is he supposed to do now?

"He raped me, y'know."

It takes a second to register in his mind. He jolts upright and stares down at her when it finally clicks. “He– *what?*”

"Back on the Bus, when it was just me and him. After I figured him out." Her voice is far too nonchalant for what she's talking about.

This whole time– every late night, every conversation they've had, every time they've spoken about him, he always thought she was just talking about his betrayal and his mind games and his obsession.

Part of him always resented her comparisons between the two of them. A small part, but a part nonetheless. Fitz is *ruined,* permanently disabled for the rest of his *life* because of what he did to him. Skye gets what– trust issues? She already had those. That's *nothing* compared to him.

It made something in him so *angry* when she acted like they were the same.

He never thought–

This whole time–

Fitz swallows. His mouth is dry. "Does Coulson know?" What he doesn't say: is that part of why he killed him?

"No. I don't think anybody does. I wouldn't be surprised if May figured it out using her ninja skills or whatever, but–" Her attempt at humor falls flat. She looks away from him. "Nobody knows. I never told anyone."

He feels like crying. His friend, *his Daisy*– "Why didn't you tell me? I would've–"

"Would've *what,* Fitz? Marched down to his cell and defended my honor? Given him a stern talking to?" She's sitting up now, staring him right in the eye in the way they both hate. "Or would you have just cut off his oxygen supply?"

She's getting mean. She frequently does when it comes to *him.* Fitz doesn't like thinking about that, and she knows it.

His hurt must show on his face, because she instantly deflates. "I'm sorry." A beat passes. "You were sick, Fitz. I couldn't put that on you. Not when you couldn't handle it."

"And after? When I could?" He asks. "Why didn't you tell me then?"

She looks away, ashamed and *angry.* "What good would it have done? What, exactly, would me telling you all that I just fucking– *stood* there and let him do that to me *change?*"

They both freeze when the base shakes around them. It only calms down when Daisy screws her eyes shut, clenches her fists and grits her teeth. Her hula girl continues to sway side to side from its place on the table.

"He was already locked up, Fitz," she says, digging her knuckles into her eye sockets. "There was already no chance he was ever going to be released. Me telling someone wouldn't've changed anything."

"But why didn't you tell *me?* I w–"

"Don't you fucking dare try to say you would've *related.*"

"I– *Christ,* Daisy, no. But I would've understood. You know what he did to me," he says. Then, quieter, "I would've understood."

Daisy just buries her face in her blanket and turns so her back is to

him.

“I don’t want to talk about it, Fitz. I shouldn’t have even brought it up.”

Fitz hovers his hand over her shoulder. “I would’ve *understood,* Daisy,” he repeats. “*Why didn’t you tell me?*”

She sits up at that, running her hands through her hair harshly. “Because it’s none of your goddamn *business,* Fitz! I didn’t want you to know. I didn’t want *anyone* to know! I *still* don’t!”

She jumps up from her bed and starts to pace back and forth. “You’re not my *dad,* Fitz. I’m not your– *girlfriend* or something,” she growls, tugging at the ends of her hair. “I don’t owe you an *explanation.* I don’t have to tell you anything.”

The base has started shaking again. He doesn’t think she realizes.

“All those conversations we had, where I talked about how much he– I trusted you with that. It’s supposed to go two ways, Daisy. That's not fair,” Fitz snaps, then frowns. “Did you think I would have– have *judged* you or something?”

She stops in her tracks. The room goes still. Fitz feels himself soften.

“Can you just– come sit back down?”

Daisy nods distantly and rejoins him on the bed, shoulder to shoulder. She buries her face in her hands. Fitz stares straight ahead.

“...I wish he wasn’t dead,” she says, voice muffled. “Why does he get to be dead while we’re still dealing with what he did to us? Why does he get to get off that easily?”

“I don’t know,” Fitz replies after a moment. “I just hope that he suffered.”

Daisy knows the others will be looking for her soon, if they aren't already. She ran away from the med bay again. She’s hiding in the back of a storage closet, the one on the far side of the base that no one ever actually uses.

She wants to leave, but nobody's taken their eyes off her. She wishes they wouldn't try to help her, wishes they would understand just how much danger they're in if she sticks around. She needs to get out of here, needs to get away so she doesn't hurt– doesn't *kill* anyone else.

Lincoln is ***dead.***

Lincoln is dead and it's all her fault.

Lincoln is dead, and the others, Coulson and May and Jemma and everyone else, are going to be next if she doesn't save them from herself.

Lincoln is dead and so is Trip and it should've been her. Why wasn't it her? Please, God, let it be her next time.

She's curled up on the floor, her overheated forehead pressed against the cool ground. She keeps retching so hard she's shaking, cold sweat across her brow. It's a wonder she hasn't actually thrown up yet.

She needs Him so bad it aches.

(*She needs Him back she needs Him back she needs Him back she

parse out who it is is so far beyond her ability right now.

The footsteps stop a couple feet away from her.

“Are you awake?”

It's Fitz. Of course it's Fitz, who she's been doing her best to avoid, which is really hard when you're under constant supervision.

She answers his question anyway. She owes him that, at least, especially after what she did. She presses her palm flat against the concrete floor, sending a small quake to vibrate the tip of his foot.

He immediately shifts away.

Daisy grits her teeth and redirects the vibrations inwards. Of course he doesn’t want her using her powers on him, not after– stupid, so *stupid.*

“Hey, no.” Fitz crouches down on her level and gently grabs her rapidly bruising wrist. “Daisy, don’t do that.”

She just wrenches her arm away. How can he even stand to touch her after what she did to him?

Fitz sighs. “Can you talk?” He asks.

She shakes her head. Her throat is killing her. Jemma, being the way she is (nice), described her freakouts as *PTSD episodes.* Daisy calls them *losing her goddamn mind because why the fuck isn’t she dead already?*

And still, even if she hadn’t been having regular screaming fits, she just gets like this sometimes. Quiet. Unable to talk. It's some leftover remnant from her childhood. She hates it. She hates being like this, hates being the way she is.

“Okay,” Fitz says. “Then you can listen.”

He sits down then, settling down with his legs folded beneath him. There’s several feet of space between them.

“You can’t blame yourself,” he starts. “He messed with your brain chemistry, Daisy. You can’t blame yourself.”

Daisy scoffs. Messing with her brain chemistry didn't make her do any of the things she did. Him *making her happy* didn't force her to drain her blood, kill those people, hurt her friends. That was all her.

(She's never been that happy before. She doesn't think she'll ever be again. She feels so *empty* now. She just wants Him back.)

Fitz tries to scoot closer, but Daisy immediately flinches backwards, accidentally slamming her head into the wall behind her in the process. It helps, surprisingly. The pain. It brings a sense of clarity, one she hasn't felt since she saw that security footage of an alien in a monster's body.

So she does it again. And again.

"Daisy, stop." Fitz grabs her head in both of his hands, preventing her from hurting herself further. He doesn't let go, even when she tries to jerk away. "*Stop it.*"

He shifts so he's cross legged, pulling her head into his lap and hunching over so he's curled around her. "It's not your fault. It's *not,*" he says, almost frantic. "You can't blame yourself."

She doesn't believe what he's saying, though. Even now, even with how tenderly he's cradling her, how gently he's talking, his body is still tense with apprehension.

Daisy screws her eyes shut. Tears drip down her face and soak into his shirt.

He sounds like he's trying to convince himself just as much as he's trying to convince her.

Daisy's entire body aches. The Framework was fake, technically all in her head, but her nervous system doesn't seem to have gotten the memo. There's no bruises, no injuries, no sign at all of what happened in there. Everything hurts anyway.

The pain spikes as she lowers herself onto the ground. She lets out a groan and clutches at her ribs. Are they broken? They certainly feel broken. She swears to God she just felt them shift.

Daisy lets out a shaky exhale and hits her forehead against her knees a couple times. It's all in her head. It's just in her head. She's fine, she's okay. Fitz won't hurt her again.

Speak of the devil, the man of the hour is seated to her left, hunched over with his head in his hands. Everyone's been looking for him for a while, and of course she's the one to actually find him, tucked away in the very back of some seldom used storage closet.

(It's a little bit funny, in a deeply unfunny way, that he picks the same exact spot to have a mental breakdown that she did. She doesn't think he even realizes it.)

God, why did she have to be the one to find him? She just wants to take way too many painkillers and take a nap. Maybe never wake up, or at least not wake up for a very, very long time.

It's quiet. Daisy tries to breathe through the pain. Fitz trembles.

"This is all your fault," he finally rasps from between his hands. He's angry. Livid, really. At her or at himself, she doesn't know. Both, probably. She certainly is. "I only created the LMDs to prevent another– I made them for *you.* "

It hurts to hear it confirmed, even if she had already figured it out. "Yeah, well, maybe you should've just suffocated him in his cell. Then none of this would've happened in the first place."

She doesn't specify who she's talking about. They both know.

"*You* should've let him die on the Bus. Or made sure you finished the job when you shot him."

"Or maybe *we* should be dead. God knows we're both trying." Daisy lets out a sigh. She's so tired. "It doesn't matter, Fitz. None of it matters."

It's silent for a while. Daisy counts the cleaning supplies on the shelves to pass the time.

"...was this what it was like for you?" Fitz murmurs after almost an hour. "This– this *emptiness?*"

She swallows. Clenches her fists against the onslaught of memories.

"Yeah," she grits out. "It'll hit you, soon, what happened. What you did. And that's–"

That's worse, she wants to say, but her throat closes up, cutting her sentence off halfway through.

"*What I did,*" Fitz echos hollowly. "I killed people– people I know. *Friends.* I tortured them, *experimented* on them. Vivisected them with no anesthetic just so I could play God."

His voice is flat, but his face is a mix of horrified and anguished.

(*And satisfied,* something in her notes. She tries to ignore it.)

It's awful to see her friend, her Fitz, like this. Like *her.*

“I didn’t resist, or– or question it. I didn’t even *hesitate,*” he gasps.

Daisy squeezes her eyes shut. She tries to tell him to stop talking, but it doesn’t come out right.

Fitz doesn’t acknowledge her. “I– I wanted it. I *liked* it, because *she* liked it. She *made* me like it.”

Oh, God. “Fitz, stop.” She puts her head down between her knees and tries not to start gagging.

But Fitz still doesn’t hear her. Or he doesn’t care. “She made me love *her.* She– she coded it so we were *in love.* I– oh, *God,* we *slept toge–*”

Daisy bolts upright and staggers over to the corner, where she promptly doubles over and throws up. The acid burns in her throat, and tears sting at the backs of her eyes.

She braces against the wall when she’s done, desperately trying to keep herself from collapsing into her own vomit. “*Please,*” she pants, trying to catch her breath. “*Please, stop talking.*”

Fitz goes quiet. Daisy breathes through her mouth and tries not to throw up again.

After another minute of silence intercut with occasional bouts of gagging, Daisy wipes her mouth with her sleeve and steps away from the corner.

“I’m sorry, I’m done,” she says, joining him back on the floor. “Can we please just– change the subject, maybe?”

Fitz nods absentmindedly, staring vacantly at the shelf in front of him. Still, he doesn’t say anything for another several minutes.

"Am I bad?" His voice shakes when he finally breaks the silence, the way it hasn't in years. "I think– I think I might be bad now. I think she

made me bad, Skye."

(She doesn't bother correcting him on the name. She doesn't think she wants to be Daisy right now anyways.)

What the hell is she even supposed to say to that? That he's wrong? That, no matter what he did, he's still good inside? They don't lie to each other, not about stuff like this.

"No worse than I am," she eventually settles on.

A beat passes.

"That's not an answer," he says quietly, head in his hands again.

Daisy sighs and pulls her knees up to her chest. "Yes, it is. We're not– *good,* Leo."

He lets out an agonized sound from behind his fingers, one she's never heard him make before. "*How?*" He asks. He sounds more desperate than she's ever heard him, and he's been plenty desperate many times before. "How do you deal with it?"

"Try to kill myself, mostly." She's joking, but not really. There's a reason she doesn't wear tshirts anymore. "But you can't do that, okay? I won't let you."

He nods in acquiescence, but she doesn't think he really means it.

"I'm serious." She turns to face him. "I can't– I can't lose you. Not you too."

"Okay," he replies. "Okay."

"Plus, I'm pretty sure Jemma would kill both of us if we committed suicide."

Fitz's shoulders start to shake with quiet laughter, and the corners of Daisy's mouth lift up in a tired grin. It's not long before she's giggling right alongside him. Both of their laughter has a slightly hysterical edge to it.

"She would find a way, wouldn't she?"

"If anyone were to figure out how to cheat death, it'd be her," Daisy agrees.

It gets quiet again after that, but it's different. More comfortable, less wrought with the tension that's been between them lately, the one she can't pinpoint the exact origin of.

She wishes she knew when it started. Wishes she could go back and shake herself by the shoulders. Wishes she never left, or maybe wishes she never stayed in the first place.

"It doesn't ever go away, does it?"

Daisy looks over at Fitz at that. He's staring straight ahead again, his eyes focusing on something she can't see. The emptiness in his eyes, the anguish on his face, the desperation in his voice; it's familiar in all the worst ways.

What is she supposed to do? She doesn't know how to fix this. What good is she if she can't even help her friend, the only one who's always been there for her?

She's not gonna lie to him. It's been almost a year since she was under His sway. She still misses Him like a limb. Probably will for the rest of her life.

"No. It doesn't."

Fitz's face crumples in defeat.

Daisy grabs his hand and threads her finger through his, leaning over until her head is on his shoulder.

"But I'm here. I get it."

Fitz nods and rests his head against hers. "I love you," he whispers into her hair. "I'm sorry."

She sends a small quake through their joined hands in reply. They both flinch at the vibrations passing between them.

Neither of them let go.

End Notes

And then they get several hugs from everyone and kisses from Jemma and they both go to extensive therapy and nothing bad happens to their relationship! 😊

Not included: Daisy and Fitz hooking up, both very much well aware that the other is using them as a proxy for Jemma while she's stuck on Maveth. They both end up in tears. It's awful for everyone involved. Picture it how you will.

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